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## A meta-media studies approach to digital pedagogy

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## **A Meta-Media Studies Pedagogy: For the Pandemic and Beyond**

### **Abstract**

During the Covid-19 Pandemic, media educators have found themselves not only teaching about media technologies but also entirely through them. Much of the panic-mode pedagogy that happened at the beginning of national lockdowns led to educators quickly adopting whatever platforms in which their institutions chose to invest, with little time for critical reflection. As time progressed and things somewhat settled, we were able to step back and evaluate our pedagogies for this moment and what we might take forward in our post-pandemic teaching. In this chapter, I reflect on teaching about and through media in the third UK lockdown (early 2021) and my attempt to introduce a meta-media studies approach.

Meta-media studies is influenced by pedagogies of care. It acknowledges the paradox of teaching and learning through corporatized media platforms, harvesting data and surveilling students whilst simultaneously teaching students about the political economy of the Internet, Foucault, and surveillance culture. Meta-media studies explores the use of media in educational cultures – a cultural field much underrepresented in media studies, although one with which all our students can identify. Meta-media studies examines the concepts of media studies, from issues of interactivity and immersion to media archaeologies, political economy, surveillance capitalism and cultures to data harvesting and institutions through the very ‘EdTech’ platforms that the classes are delivered with and through. Such an approach aims to be transparent to students, to enable them to make choices about how, where and in which ways they engage and express their presence through their learning experiences.

After reflecting on how I adopted a meta-media studies approach during the 2021 UK lockdown, I then consider ideas for continuing this pedagogy in the future. I propose that as universities are exploring more extensive, long-term integration of digital media for teaching and learning that it is media educators who should be at the forefront of this discussions. Their critical expertise will ensure that any further embedding of EdTech will serve our students more than corporations.

### **Author Bio**

Dr Victoria Grace Walden is a Senior Lecturer in Media Studies and Director of Student Experience in the School of Media, Arts and Humanities at the University of Sussex. She is soon to take on the role of Director of Learning Enhancement, focused on critical digital pedagogies, online learning, and the inclusive curriculum. She was recently elected to join the Board of the Media Education Association in the UK. Before moving into HE, she taught media and film studies in Sixth Form colleges for 7 years, trained teachers in these fields through the British Film Institute and Media Education Association events and was an examiner and moderator for two exam boards. Her research interests include media education and digital pedagogies, and digital Holocaust memory and education. She has published on these topics in *Short Film Studies*, *Memory Studies*, *Journal of Media Practice*, *FLOW*, *Frames Cinema Journal*, *Holocaust Studies* and *Animation Studies*, alongside her monographs and forthcoming edited collections. She is editor of <https://reframe.sussex.ac.uk/digitalholocaustmemory/> and can be found on Twitter @Holocaust\_digi and @MediaStudiesD